# Habitat Impact and Deer Activity Report Guidance Note

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## Revision History

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Date  | Version  | Comments  | Sections updated  |
| 20.01.2022  | Draft  |   |   |
| 28.01.2022  | V1  | Reformatted into FC standard template |  Aesthetic changes only |
| 09.01.2023 | V2 | Content review | Minor text changes |
| 24.01.2023 | Final |  |  |

Author/Who to Contact?

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## Introduction

The Habitat Impact and Activity Report is a compulsory element within WS1. It relates to all the parcels under the WS1 agreement and must be provided to the FC at Years 1, 3 and 5, usually after the end of April (by which time the impact survey and exclosure surveys should have taken place), but certainly by the year end.

The report template summarises results derived from the survey data forms completed in the field. The forms themselves are not required for this report but should be retained for the grant period. Guidance consistent with the reporting template sections is given below.

## Background information

This section identifies the Holding Name, SBI number, the person undertaking the survey. It identifies the deer species present and those which cause the most impacts.

Habitat impact and deer activity survey – results and comments

A survey may take place over an entire holding, or in individual woodlands or compartments within that holding. The number and location of surveys will be agreed with your Deer Officer. Each row represents an individual survey, add rows if required. Enter habitat impact and deer activity summary results derived from the top of your Impact/Activity record sheets.

Comments should be made on any impacts to the main objectives of the woodland area as stated in the Woodland Management Plan and any other significant habitat impacts, including such elements as natural regeneration, floral interests, and coppice growth.

Comments should be made on deer activity, including intensity of activity whether generally or localised, using indicators such as usage of deer tracks, slots found, and deer seen. Make a note if hares and rabbits are present and if they are having any effect.

If weather conditions leading up to the survey were out of the ordinary such as prolonged periods of, for instance, very dry/wet/cold weather make a note because these are likely to have an influence on the visibility or otherwise of several features.

If there have been repeat surveys an indication of trend may be possible.

## Exclosure plots – results and comments

Exclosures should include only those funded by WD2 and WS1. There may be more than one exclosure in each woodland, the number and location of surveys will be agreed with your Deer Officer. Each row represents an individual exclosure, add rows if required. The woodland name and exclosure code must be sufficient to uniquely identify the exclosure. Enter the Summary of Difference scores derived from the Exclosure record sheets, recording results as High (H), Moderate (M), Low(L), or None (N), according to the degree to which growth inside the exclosure exceeds that outside. Make comments on any really significant differences. Trampling (outside) may also be a feature that will be noteworthy. If there have been repeat surveys an indication of trend may be possible.

## Survey route

Each row represents a different survey, add rows if required. The route can be traced using an electronic tracking device or mobile phone or simply drawn onto a map.

For this report, a clear simple screen grab or low resolution .jpeg of the route should be placed in the appropriate column on the table and clearly labelled with the woodland name.

## Photographs taken during the survey

In each row, the left column contains a single photo taken at one location. Use a new row if more than one photo is taken at the same location. The number of photographs will vary but must include the woodland exclosures and their associated control area included in each survey route, and any other items of significant interest found along the survey route, for example, a wide area view of a representative part of the woodland, significant signs of impact or recovery, natural regeneration, floral interest, and significant deer activity signs. Photos pasted into the table should resize automatically, if not, select the photo and reduce it to around 3cm on its shortest side. The comments in the second column should describe the detail in the photographs.

If the report file becomes too big to send via email, try using your software to compress the picture files or save and send as a .pdf document.